UNITY

FREEDOM, FELLOWSHIP AND CHARACTER IN RELIGION

Letters Out of Russia

By Ruth Louise Niedhauser

Acquisitiveness: Virtue or Vice? *An Editorial*
- - - - - - - - *Joseph Ernest McAfee*

Religion Versus Morality - *Oliver L. Reiser*

On Being Narrow Minded - - *Harry Taylor*

Other articles and book reviews by Julia N. Budlong, Ralph Westlake, Eliot White, Mortimer Brewster Smith, John Haynes Holmes, Lucia Trent, Ralph Cheyney.

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The Field

"The world is my country, to do good is my Religion."

From Chairman's Address

To the No More War Movement at its Annual Conference Held in Leeds, Oct. 13-14, 1934 (Wilfred Wellock, Ex-M. P.)

We meet in this Conference in the knowledge that civilization is in peril as at no time in its history, and may at a very early date completely collapse in the conflagration of another world war. The whole world realizes this, and yet seems unable to control the forces which are hurling it to its doom.

The tragedy of this situation is heightened by the fact that it coincides with the age of abundance, in which science has brought forth the treasures of the earth in such measure as to make possible a life of reasonable comfort and ample leisure for the entire human race.

This situation ought to be a challenge to every thinking person, and certainly every pacifist, to discover its causes, and having found them to expose them and work for their removal. Inquiry leaves one in no doubt as to what those causes are, while the serious position they reveal calls for plain speaking.

The outstanding fact in the life of today is the colossal war that is raging to the ends of the earth for the possession and control of material wealth and the means of its production, and thus for financial and political power. That war takes upon itself a thousand forms. It manifests itself in struggles between rival industrial, commercial and financial groups both within and without national boundaries, for the possession of trade and markets; in conflicts between employers and employed, and between the possessors of wealth and the dispossessed, and, finally, between nations. The havoc it produces has given rise to a supreme struggle, world-wide in extent, between those who believe in the possibility of a reasonable life for all, and those who would perpetuate a social order which places economic and financial power in the hands of comparatively small groups of people who use it primarily in their own interest and to the detriment of the general well-being.

That complex conflict has

(*Continued on page 158*)

UNITY

"He Hath Made of One All Nations of Men"

Volume CXIV MONDAY, DECEMBER 10, 1934 Number 8

VIA DOLOROSA

I knew the road to take,
But I lost it at the Market Place.
The crowd was rough and tumble,
It caught me in the whirl,
And whirled me round and round,
Until dizzy with the game,
I staggered from the rabble
Into His arms, and He showed me
How to find the road again.

IRENE BOUDEN

The new constitution for India, now the chief business before the English Parliament, is obviously no solution of a problem which can of course only be solved by a drastic grant of liberty to the Indian people. The praise of the Manchester *Guardian* proves at least the high intellectual quality of the document, and the serious purpose behind it. But one wonders why statesmen, however able and sincere, should fool themselves with half-way programs which can never satisfy either of the parties in contention, least of all give content to the party in grievance and complaint, and thus never bring peace to the disordered battlefield. One thinks of the Simon Report which was dead before it was born. This present plan of Indian settlement is not thus dead perhaps, for it has life enough to rend the Tory Party in twain, and to stir India to such outrage and revolt as the nation has not known since the first days of the Simon Commission. But that the plan will be adopted, or, if adopted, will be accepted by the Indian people, is altogether out of the question. What will happen is two things which will complicate the problem beyond all confusion hitherto experienced. On the one hand, the Tory Party will be hopelessly divided, and Britain therefore thrown into vast political disorder. The duel between Baldwin and Churchill will shake the land as by an earthquake, and clear the way for an eventual Labor triumph, which will straightway end all settlement, or even consideration, of the Indian problem as now proposed. On the other hand, the All-India Congress, and indeed all India itself, cast into dissension in recent years, will be once again united, and thus immeasurably strengthened for the fight ahead. Gandhi will in due course return to active political leadership, and a new era of Indian independence be once more begun. By compromises, evasions, pretenses, Britain thus weakens again her cause, and arouses her enemy to new hope and greater determination.

'Tis an old tale and often told,

says Scott, in a phrase far more widely applicable than to his own romantic narrative. History, in other words, repeats itself, and will repeat again, until India tomorrow, like America yesterday, is free.

What a game—this diplomacy business! These alliances and ententes, by which are meant intrigues, conspiracies and plottings! Is there any principle in it all—any wise and unselfish endeavors after peace and the common happiness of men? Not a particle! Take Italy and France, for example! These two nations have been at loggerheads ever since the close of the Great War, owing to a conflict of interests springing from that war. Now, recently, the two countries have been coming together, and seeking understanding and cooperation. Does this mean that they have at last found the way of friendship? Not at all! In recent months, owing to the menace of Hitler, it has been for the advantage of France and Italy to forget their jealousies and enmities in the face of the new and dreadful peril to them both. Already this *rapprochement* has been endangered by the death of Alexander and Barthou, and would of course be ended at once if Hitler should become less threatening, or even change his policies. Another beautiful example is that of France and Russia. For years these two governments were bitterly hostile to one another. Then suddenly they cemented an alliance only less firm than that which united the two countries before the war. Germany is again the explanation—a terror which makes even Bolshevism seem not unattractive to the Frenchman. Illustrations of this sort in international relations are as old as history and of universal application. At bottom, there is no such thing as accord or concord between nations—only temporary mutuality of interest. In the same way there is no such thing as morality or idealism, brotherhood or goodwill, in relations between states—only rules of expediency. Our governments, in their foreign policies at least, are just so many gangsters who will clasp a hand or cut a throat as advantage at the moment may determine. As a matter of fact, we are flattering these governments in saying that they are gangsters, for gangsters have rigorous standards of honor as among themselves, and governments have none at all.

The menace of the Saar is so fearful a prospect that we do not even dare to face it. We are told that

the valley is already infested with Nazi spies and conspirators. The enrollment of voters for the special election next month is so grossly disproportionate to the whole number of the population that colonization in familiar Tammany fashion is obvious. An efflux of all Jewish inhabitants immediately after the plebiscite, which it is taken for granted the Nazis will carry, will add thousands of wretched beings to the crowds of German refugees already too numerous to be properly carried. Catholics in large numbers are expected to join Jews, under the cruel rod of Swastika persecution. The French army on the borders is watched by the hordes of Brown Shirts on the opposite borders. And a weak and timid League of Nations marks time while disaster speeds on wingéd feet. What we see is the spectacle of Hitler, baffled for the moment in Austria, now turning the full power of his regime to securing in the Saar what he lost temporarily in the *anschluss*. Here, of course, he has the immense advantage of having justice on his side to a degree never possible in the Austrian crisis, for the Versailles Treaty was in nothing more abominable than in its wresting of the Saar from the German Reich. But the advent of Hitler has changed a situation which under ordinary circumstances the world would gladly have corrected. As it is, the return of the Saar to Germany seems now as undesirable as the seizure of Austria. Especially to France does it seem as impossible as the *anschluss* seemed to Italy. But what to do, when the election is in order, and any interference with the terms of the agreement certain to be resented and resisted, most justly, by the German people? That France will take any such high hand as Italy took in the case of Austria, is not to be believed. But will she stand by indefinitely, while her enemy thus extends his power for the next war which he proclaims unashamedly to the world? A terrible crisis is approaching. 1935 will be a fateful year.

Among Mr. Roosevelt's successes, put the TVA (Tennessee Valley Authority) and the use which he is making of it! Such speeches as the President delivered on his recent visits to the sites of the great federal power development projects may well be taken as marking a new era in the history of electrical power. Hitherto, the private companies have had it all their own way. And have they gouged the people! In all probability the story of deliberate exploitation of the people which has been written by these power companies has no parallel in the history of the nation. The story of Standard Oil, for example, is kindergarten stuff in comparison. That the cure of the ill is public ownership and control was made manifest by every instance of socialization, in Canada and elsewhere, which came to hand. But the power companies saw to it that information on this point was scant and inaccurate. Under a barrage of propaganda unmatched by anything outside the annals of war, the public was hopelessly misled as to the real facts about the cost of electrical service. But now a champion appears to do battle for the people; and in the TVA this champion has a weapon as effective as the sword of Siegfried against the dragon, Fafner. It is our conviction that the day of private monopoly in the field of power production and transmission is now definitely over. Under the leadership of the President, which of course is irresistible, the people are bound to come into their rights, and thus "take the initiative," as Mr. Roosevelt put it, "in utilizing to the fullest extent their natural resources for their own benefit." When sentiments like this appear on the front page of the New York *Times* under three-column streamer headlines, it may be taken as certain that the change has come. In such an hour of social achievement, it may be well not only to hail the President, who cannot be praised too highly for his brave and steadfast policy, but also to salute Senator Norris whose single-handed fight to keep Muscle Shoals out of the hands of the private power interests may be said to have begun this period of history. After all, there is some progress. Democracy it not yet played out.

The action of the United States Supreme Court in the Mooney case seems to be rather technical, but it is as momentous in its possible and perhaps probable consequences as a hole in a dike. The significant thing is that this case has for years been dammed up behind a bulwark that nobody to date has been able to penetrate. Now comes this action by the Washington tribunal, and the floods may at last sweep through. Also, and most important, the order of the court gets the Mooney case *out of the hands of California.* If anything is irrevocably fixed in this unstable world it is the determination of that state to keep Tom Mooney behind the bars. Guilty or not, it's at San Quentin that California proposes to hold him. Months ago we gave up all hope of ever getting any action from California courts, or officials, or people. But now, thank God, the case is snatched from the state's unwilling hands. California isn't going to have anything more to say about it any more. Which convinces us that Tom Mooney is on the way to freedom! Another hole in a dike, although of a very different character, is the Florida-Georgia lynching case of some weeks ago. The horror of this case is well nigh unparalleled, even in the hideous annals of lynching. The careful preparations, the public announcements, the gathering of the countryside as for a festival, the torturing and maiming of the victim, and through all these dreadful hours the utter inactivity of sheriffs, mayors, and governors—all this makes a tale too ghastly to be told. *But that Negro did not die in vain!* His screams of agony, mingled with the cheers and laughter of the crazy crowd, will not be stilled until the federal Anti-Lynching Bill has been passed by both

houses of Congress and signed by the President. This measure, like Mooney's release, has been up against impassable barriers. But now has come a smash which must crash down the wall. Federal action is ending racketeering and kidnapping—why not lynching? At last, the hour has struck!

In an article in the *Christian Century* (November 7th last), now reprinted and widely distributed, the Editor of UNITY discusses the first year of Repeal, and surveys the situation as disclosed by newspaper reports, government statements, and personal observations. Summarizing the record of this past twelve-month, Mr. Holmes declares that (1) "Repeal has released a flood of liquor which has increased beyond anything known in the last decade"; (2) "Much of the drinking today is hard drinking"; (3) "Drunken driving has become a momentous problem"; (4) "The saloon is back;" (5) "Bootlegging is with us in undiminished abundance"; (6) "The speakeasy is still alive"; (7) and "Lawlessness and crime are as rampant as ever." In other words, the liquor situation is worse today than ever. Repeal has made confusion worse confounded. This is no surprise to the "drys" who prophesied again and again that all this would happen, but these dreadful consequences of releasing the flood of "booze" must be an awful shock to the "wets," assuming that these "wets" were sincere in their belief that regulation would be a safe and effective substitute for prohibition. It is interesting to recall the wild promises of the "wets"—that the saloon would not come back, that the bootlegger would disappear, that speakeasies and night-clubs would close their doors, that crime would decrease and lawlessness be cured. Anybody who had lived through the pre-Prohibition days knew how silly, if not actually dishonest, were such ideas as these. Prohibition even at its worst was so great an improvement over all that had gone before, and now has followed after, that comparisons are ridiculous. But the "wets" would have their drinks—and now they have plunged the nation into an orgy of indecency and danger which will take at least another generation to clean up. Of course, the ultimate outcome is certain. Prohibition will come back as quickly as it went away, and this time to stay. But the price of liquor, as of war, is now so terrible that one wonders if society can endure long enough to get rid of it at last.

It is amazing how the fact of profits sheds a flood of light into the dark depths of all controversial social questions. This fact is a kind of talisman which touches every situation with meaning. It explains all, both cause and cure. Take this issue of clean movies, for example! We are all for the decency campaign—just as a healthy awakening of moral sentiment, if nothing more. But the boycott, wholesome as it is, and effective as it may be, is still in essence superficial. For these silly and salacious pictures are being made not merely because the producers are ignorant and vulgar men, but much more because they are greedy money-makers who are seeking the quickest way to large profits. They put out dirty pictures because, themselves dirty, they think the public likewise dirty and thus eager to pay good money for wallowing in muck. The decency campaign has not changed these men a particle. It has simply changed (temporarily) their policy, because suddenly they are made to see reason for believing that profits from cleanliness are now more certain than profits from filth. But the profit-motive remains, to corrupt in the future as in the past! The same thing is true of the armaments question. Why are campaigns against armies and navies invariably unsuccessful? Because behind the ships and the guns, the whole paraphernalia of preparedness, is a profit-motive so stupendous that, under the existing economic system at least, it is bound to sweep everything before it. So long as the manufacture of the weapons of war is in private hands for private profit, the struggle against war is like spitting in the wind. So also, of course, with capitalism, which is at bottom nothing more nor less than production for profit! The NRA would still have production for profit, though wheat-fields be turned into deserts, and pigs into fertilizer, and men into paupers, and thus is availing nothing, or worse than nothing, for the permanent relief of a stricken nation. Profits? That's Satan at work! Until this demon is expelled from our world, there can be no heaven here.

Acquisitiveness: Virtue or Vice?

The eminent British economist Tawney has characterized our modern western civilization as pre-eminently that of an acquisitive society. In the common parlance, it is a realm where the go-getter is king.

This is perhaps more strikingly true of our own American society than it is of the internal economy of any other country. On the other hand, the national policies of several European states more strongly display the character than does their domestic economic life. An acquisitive imperialism has long been the passion of these European states. Our plunge into national imperialism at the turn of the new century has not had the continuing and hearty support of American public sentiment.

The national imperialists have had the field very much to themselves in parts of Europe. Imperialism has been frankly and openly supported by their peoples. Since the World War there has been much outspoken resistance. Indeed, it has now become clear to millions of thoughtful citizens throughout Europe, as among

Americans generally, that the World War was in reality simply a clash between the national go-getters.

European imperialism had been rampant for so long that unclaimed domain anywhere in the world was too scarce to appease greedy appetites of imperialistic states. Especially did a late-comer in the field of imperialistic aggression feel aggrieved by the limitations which world conditions imposed. It may have been quite as easy to justify German imperialism as that of Britain or of France, but Germany had the misfortune of entering the field after most of the "backward peoples" and their domain had already been gobbled by greedy imperialists.

Britain and France had already spread their empires over most of the habitable globe, and even such little "empires" as Holland and Belgium were "sitting pretty" and complacently drawing large revenues from their exploitation of portions of Asia and Africa, before the German imperialists awoke to the need of Germany's "place in the sun."

The violent clash of imperialistic interests, which it is now clear the World War really was, has raised question even among heretofore imperialistic peoples as to whether go-gettism is quite the civilization-builder which they had assumed it to be. Big as the world is, there is not room for the go-getters, if all are to turn go-getter. Imperialistic ambitions finally consume and destroy the very civilization which they set out to produce.

There is not a thinker the world over who does not recognize the insanity of the imperialistic policies now still rampant in Europe. They are breeding new war, everybody agrees, the destructiveness of which will make the carnage of world-war battle fields pale into pleasant festivities.

What is the more disturbing is that this passion, like most other insanity, speedily passes beyond control. Everybody knows that new war will turn Europe into a madhouse whose inmates have been freely supplied with the means of mutual destruction, but at the same time everybody in Europe seems to feel that war, if not immediately imminent, is soon inevitable.

The only hope of saving European civilization is the growth of sentiment which definitely and intelligently repudiates not only national imperialism in its present brutal display, but replaces the whole philosophy of the go-getter with domestic policies which cease to cultivate the go-getter's greedy ambitions.

This is actually happening in the Scandinavian countries. They remained neutral in the late war, and they will refuse to participate in a new war. Their internal cultus is steadily replacing ambitions of the go-getter with aspirations to arts and fundamental culture which subordinate the go-getter spirit, if it is not quite expunged. The transformation of the British Empire into the British Commonwealth of Nations looks in the same direction, however incurable any skeptic may believe British imperialism to be.

American national imperialism is scotched; in this country ambition to world empire is now never openly expressed. But in our internal economy is the go-getter still king? Are we essentially and incorrigibly an acquisitive society bent on destroying itself? Perhaps that comes more nearly defining the issue of today than we think.

JOSEPH ERNEST MCAFEE.

Jottings

"I made Huey Long," says Senator John H. Overton, of Louisiana! We haven't heard anything like that since we were told of the man who boasted of being the father of a feeble-minded child.

It's well to remember, in looking back on the last election and pondering the march of radicalism in this country, that in California the vote of Upton Sinclair, plus the vote of Haight, plus the vote of the Socialist candidate constituted a majority over Merriam. If the radicals ever learn to stick together in this country, they may get somewhere.

When Charles Darwin went to the Galapagos Archipelago on the famous journey of the "Beagle," he found some queer animals on the islands. If he were to go there now, he would find some queer humans.

If we would measure aright the ballyhoo now swamping the newspapers in the interest of national recovery, note the following headline in a New York evening newspaper:

"Labor Shortage
Bared by NRA."

And this, with only 18,000,000 people on the relief rolls! Apparently Washington thinks the people will swallow anything.

The Princess Alexis Mdivani, the former Miss Barbara Hutton, of New York, celebrated her twenty-second birthday with a $10,000 party in Paris. She limited her expenditure on this gala occasion to this picayune amount because, she said, "We don't think it fitting to spend too much in these times."

Yankee Doodle "stuck a feather in his cap." But he didn't begin to make the sensation that Queen Mary made the other day when she stuck a feather in her bonnet.

J. H. H.

Religion Versus Morality

The modern world is utilitarian in its attitudes. Unlike the medieval world, it does not take its traditions, ideals, and institutions for granted. This practical interest leads men to judge all conventions and institutions in terms of their human value, here and now, in administering to the needs of the social order. Modern utilitarianism is "this worldly" and not "other worldly." Thus it comes about that the label, "made in heaven,"—once attached to time-honored beliefs and institutions—no longer suffices to guarantee their human value.

One of the most interesting manifestations of the sweep of the critical spirit behind social utilitarianism is found in our changing attitude towards religion. The question—formerly never posed—of whether religion is a blessing or a curse to the human race is now frequently considered. The reply which is usually given to this question by partisan disputants is categorical—it is either "yes" or "no." But such an answer seems to me to represent the wrong method of approach. Since it is necessary to be brief, let me say at once that it is here my purpose to defend the idea that no generalization can be made which will cover all cases.

It all depends on how religion functions. Religion is valuable when it contributes to morality, and becomes a curse when it hinders this, or positively fosters anti-moral movements. This view that religion may in some instances be immoral may come to some persons as a shock, especially to those who hold that the source and sanction of all moral principles lies in religion, or in God as the ultimate foundation of all morality, Many persons hold that morality must come from a supernatural source, or at least presupposes a conception of a cosmic power working for righteousness. Without raising the more fundamental issue of the necessity of theism as a basis for morality, I shall here content myself with pointing out that such a view usually is based upon the notion of a *revealed* religion, and that the foil to this idea of the necessity for theism is found in the actual *history of any religion,* which shows that moral principles evolve, under the guidance of changed environmental conditions, new experiences, and the consequent necessity for a reinterpretation of the utterances of the prophets and founders of such religions. The history of Judaism and Christianity illustrates this no less than other supposedly inspired or revealed religions.

In order to explain and defend the thesis I have stated above it is necessary first to outline what morality is conceived to involve when it is thus freed from its traditional religious moorings.

Following the view of many ethicists, it is here assumed that in any act capable of moral evaluation there are two aspects to be considered (*a*) the *intention* or *motive* of the act, and (*b*) the *results* or *consequences* of the act. A moral or immoral act must be a result of a conscious choice; it must be voluntary and purposive. (The acceptance of a behavioristic psychology does not change this, since the contrast between voluntary and involuntary action appears in the behavioristic scheme in the distinction between striped and unstriped musculature.) Any person not capable of such action is amoral, or non-moral. Thus the behavior of imbeciles, idiots, morons in some degree, insane persons, and children is neither moral nor immoral—it is non-moral. It must be noted, however, that the question of the place of reward and punishment is not to be determined solely in terms of responsibility for acts done, since this involves also the question of whether such praise or blame can modify the future conduct of such non-moral individuals.

A good act, then, is one which is inspired by a good motive. A good motive is one which emanates from a feeling of good will (Kant), or love. It is a simple fact of introspective psychology that some of our acts spring from feelings of kindness, sympathy, pity, and the like, while others are manifestations of fear, anger, jealousy, or the desire to harm others. To be good, therefore, one must have good motives, a subjective attitude of desire to benefit others.

But this is not the whole story. The road to hell is paved with good intentions, and many a good-intentioned but ill-resulting action has been excused on the ground that "I meant well." The other aspect of conduct, without which no action is fully moral, is that the act must lead to the right objective results—socially desirable consequences. What "good" consequences are is not easy to state, but in general those actions which contribute to social progress satisfy that demand. We can not here enter upon a detailed discussion of the criteria of social progress, but to indicate roughly what is meant it may be stated that progress towards a more ideal social order involves at least two things: (a) the creation of a condition in which each person who is willing to work is guaranteed the minimal requirements of food, shelter, and clothing, and (b) the development of social institutions which make it possible for every person to find expression for his particular talents and interests. In general an ideal society would be one in which every person has enough to do of the thing he likes to do, and can do, to make life zestful, or worth living. Such a world does not exist at present, though it is certainly not beyond hope of attainment.

I do not know that anyone has worked out the possible combinations of acts, on the assumption that every moral act has two aspects (subjective and objective), each of which can be either good or bad; but the scheme is quite simple. If *g* stands for good, and *b* for bad, and *M* stands for motives and *C* for consequences, then we have the following four classes of acts:

Mg Cg—Intelligent philanthropy; advocating humane reforms; etc.

Mg Cb—Prohibitory laws of misguided reformers.

Mb Cg—Desire to harm, but unwittingly do good.

Mb Cb—Murder of a socially useful citizen.

The reader can add many illustrations to my own list of examples.

It would be an interesting question to discuss whether more harm is done by unintelligent but well-meaning reformers, or by clever but ill-motivated criminals, but this is beyond our scope. It is obvious that the person of highest moral character is the person of the first type—an individual of benevolent impulses (good motives) with sufficient intelligence to foresee the consequences of his acts and choose actions that lead to socially beneficial results. Of course, no man is omniscient, and in a complex world all of us will

make mistakes. But certainly the view expressed by the statement, "be good sweet maid and let those who will be clever" (wise), is herewith shown to be false, for the sweet maid could not be "good" unless she were "wise." Here we agree with Socrates when he asserts a close relation between intelligence and morality.

And now we ask, what has this to do with religion? The answer is that religion has frequently taken the wrong stand on social problems and thereby assisted the forces making for immorality. Orthodox religion claims to be revealed, and this means that it looks backwards in time to past patterns of conduct and "upward" in space to transcendental sources for its ideals, and thereby obstructs the intelligent discussion of moral issues in terms of their consequences in this world. The attitude of orthodox denominationalism on questions of marriage, birth control, economic problems, medical research, the teachings of science, etc., is frequently ultra-conservative and opposed to social and intellectual progress. To be sure, religion occasionally does become radical and demand a more progressive form of social justice, but these instances are in the minority.

The fundamental trouble is that orthodox religion insists upon regarding certain acts as inherently and for all time good or bad, irrespective of the consequences in individual cases. Blind obedience to specific commands that are good for all time is an unintelligent morality. The stereotype for this moral outlook was set by the Mosaic law, and official religion has never gotten away from it. But in terms of our own analysis, *no act in itself is good or bad* (this includes "violating contracts," "murder," etc.), *but the same act* (objectively) *may be good at one time and bad at another,* depending on the consequences. It is true, however, that in the majority of cases certain classes of acts are socially harmful, e. g., lying, stealing, etc.

Religion, then, is in itself neither a benefit nor a curse to the human race. It depends upon how it functions. If it looks backward, is ultra-conservative, and obstructs the free analysis of moral issues it is a curse; if it fosters intelligence and holds up unselfish motives for conduct it is a blessing. With respect to the influence of religion in the past, I shall not try to determine whether the Hebrew-Christian religious tradition has been beneficial or harmful to western European culture. I am here concerned only with the present and the future. This we do know: churches are going concerns; billions of dollars are invested in religious institutions; and millions of people are loyal to their respective denominations. Such a powerful institution of society can not readily be abolished. But it can be changed, provided religion is sufficiently flexible to readjust itself. Religion can be a blessing when it is freed from supernaturalism and the claims of verbal inspiration. In fostering such ideals as love, and the brotherhood of man, religion can be an instrument in the development of the proper subjective attitude in conduct. But the evaluation of the goodness or badness of acts in terms of social consequences must be taken out of the field of authority, tradition, revelation, and convention, and put within the domain of intelligence. It is the business of a science of ethics to formulate a program of social reform, and religion will have to learn to take its social objectives from moral science. This, it is obvious, is simply a plea for a humanistic religion, and I, for one, believe that if this transition from fundamentalism to humanism does not take place religion will become a fossil of cultural evolution. If we can not reshape religion so that it supplies the emotional drive for social reform, working towards a supernational, super-racial, and super-social class system, then indeed orthodox religion will itself become its own Anti-Christ!

OLIVER L. REISER

Letters Out of Russia*

I

Moscow, USSR., July 25, 1934.

Dearest Mother:

Got your letter of July 7th, sent airmail, this morning. How good it is to hear from you!

Yesterday I saw the most thrilling spectacle I have ever seen in the twenty-one years of my existence. It was the occasion of the Youth and Athletes Demonstration in Red Square. Some 150,000 of Soviet youth and athletes marched through the Red Square, twenty abreast and in long straight lines, for three and a half solid hours in front of the Tribunal (where I was fortunate enough to have a place) and before Stalin, Kalinin, Voroshilov and the rest of the heads of Party and Government, who always stand in the tribunal over Lenin's Tomb.

As the huge clock on the Kremlin wall, at one side of Red Square, boomed out the hour of three, the Square was filled with tens of thousands of young people in abbreviated athletic costumes of red, blue, orange, green and white, carrying tennis rackets, oars, flowers, streamers, nets, and other symbols of their sport. All this color, the deeply tanned skins of the young Soviets, and the two huge bands, which played incessantly during the whole demonstration, were dazzling in the hot sun. After the Internationale and a swift review of the standing columns of youth able to get into the square and a greeting from the Tribunal, the procession began.

It was organized to perfection—not too regimented and yet in perfect harmony. By the four main streets giving into the Square came the waiting legions of equally impressive athletes. Not until six o'clock had the Square cleared and then some 600 gymnasts and dancers performed, occupying the entire Square with their performance. At the end of the demonstration young Soviet aviators and balloonists exhibited their abilities above the Square.

Every form of sport was represented by thousands of young people—swimming, tennis, volleyball, soccer, parachute jumping, aviation, hiking, track and field gymnastics, dancing, bicycling. The impression of solidarity and enthusiasm was brought home. Never have I seen such a beautiful parade and demonstration so sincere, spontaneous, and devoid of superfluity. There is something invincible and everlasting about spirit of this kind, don't you think?

H. G. Wells, the old liberal and non-Marxist, is in the USSR, and in spite of all the unsympathetic and

*By Ruth Louise Niedhauser, granddaughter of Sydney Strong, and niece of Anna Louis Strong.—Editor.

really unsubstantiated things he has said about Marxism and the Soviet Union, he is being treated royally and "shown the town."

I believe that I told you that I had become a member of the trade union; and how I was asked all about my father—how I came (alone or with others), and if my parents owned property in the United States. Huh! and wasn't I glad *my* Dad wasn't Fleishhacker!

Love,
RUTH LOUISE.

P. S. Moscow is at present crawling with tourists. Here are a few little glimpses of them.

The other afternoon I was seated in the lobby of the Savoy Hotel waiting for a friend, when an American walked up to the young Russian girl, obviously the Intouriste guide of his "group" and asked through his nose—"Could you tell me if there is a Rotary in town —You know, Ro-ta-ry . . . No, no, not a thing with wheels!—Rotary, an *eating* club, Ro-ta-ry?"

There is a story about a well-meaning American woman of indefinite age, who during her tour through the Kremlin was obviously impressed by the jewel collection of the former Tsar. Back at the hotel she confided to two of her friends—"Never have I seen so many wonderful jewels—Never in all—well I just can't express it! You know, I almost believe it was *right* for them to have had that Revolution."

Then the chic American stylist, who quite enjoyed the colorful youth demonstration. She wanted samples of some of the dyes, especially the blue used for the uppers of some of the athletic uniforms in the performance. She said that the blue was a new shade and she wanted to introduce it in America—Lord, if she only knew the unusual blue (if it was unusual) was most likely caused by a mistake in dyeing. She said America was tired of Paris styles—that last year they went Spanish—this year they are going Chinese—and from all indications next year they will go Soviet! ! Will wonders never cease—Spanish style is all right and Chinese is all right if you like it—but Soviet—well, they'll have to create one first!

II

Moscow, August 25, 1934.

Dear Mother:

Day before yesterday (free-day) I went out to the Trud Commune, a huge cooperative of some 3,000 "incorrigible" criminals, not counting their families who happen to live with them. The site of the Commune is about 40 minutes by train from Moscow and is near beautiful pine forests and lovely green meadows. There are no fences, walls, or bars of any description. The idea is "let them run" if they want to break out and go back to their old life—sooner or later they will be picked up again and will want to come back. The theory is that if given a proper chance a person is really quite willing to lead a productive life and also that a socially useful life can be made just as attractive as a life of crime.

The manner of selecting those to come to the Commune is rather peculiar to us—the prisoners apply to come (generally they apply with the idea of going to a very easy place to escape from and very near a large city), and only the very worst ones are considered. Those who are not "bad enough" are considered as not needing the help of the commune, and in a very short time are put back into society wholly on their own.

The buildings are beautiful, modern apartment houses, gymnasiums, factories (at this commune they make knitted goods and sport equipment—skates, tennis rackets, etc.) an extensive art studio, dining halls, a school building, and a fine soccer field and tennis courts. The living accommodations are really better than those we have in Moscow! The people get wages at their place of work (whether it be the factory or, in fact, the art studio, if they have ability along the line of art) and pay for their board and room; and what remains (a worker in the Soviet Union always has wages left over since he pays for food and lodging according to his salary) he can spend for anything he desires except Vodka (stronger than whiskey) and cards. When the Commune was started the directors or managers of the factories, apartments, and all the rest were outsiders—now there is only one "outside" person left, and he is only there because he was one of the first organizers. All the important and responsible positions are competently filled by members of the Commune.

When an individual first comes to the Commune he is given five days in which to become acquainted and in which to "look over" the place. After that he is given a job in some one of the activities of the community and is encouraged to develop his abilities and "work up." When he comes to the Commune he is encouraged to work, study, and improve himself, but quite frequently he refuses to participate. The situation is handled by the others (who quite probably once were in the very same mental state) in this manner: they do not force him to do anything he does not *want* to do; they go about their work and leave him to do whatever he desires to do, but after work they include him in their social and athletic activities quite spontaneously and naturally. Eventually this treatment breaks down even the most calloused "old boys." Eventually (it *sometimes* takes as long as several months) the reclaimed person comes around and wants to participate in the work and study. They admit that some persons run away, but they do everything they can to persuade them to stay (if they can hold them there just for a short time, the job from then on advances swiftly).

All those in the Commune must go to school until they have completed the secondary school but they *can* go on and complete university courses. It is possible to what they call "graduate." After three years of useful life in the Commune, they can become completely free men and women. Their eligibility is decided first by a special committee and then by the commune as a whole. Members of the Commune have become Party members (during the Party Cleaning last year the examiners were very agreeably surprised at the high quality of the Party members at Trud Commune), and they can even become members of the OGPU (secret police)! In others words, everything is possible for them.

However, when the members are given their "graduation" certificate they generally prefer to remain in the Commune and continue their work there—I don't blame them, because they certainly have fine facilities, and can come and go as they wish.

The man who showed us over the Commune and was our host had been a habitual thief and a member of a gang. He came to the Commune (the last time he was arrested) because some former members of his gang were at the Commune and they urged him to do so, saying that he would like it. He came solely because it was an easy place to escape from.

Many times during the first few weeks in the Com-

mune he thought of leaving, but his friends urged him to stick it out "just a little longer." Each time he said all right, and it wasn't long before he became completely readjusted and still had his self-respect because he had in a sense worked out his own "destiny."

A man can have his own family with him in the Commune and there are special suites of rooms for them. They can have their meals privately and live quite as they would if they had a good job in Moscow.

I was on night shift last week—hours from 6:30 p. m. to midnight (sometimes later if the late news does not come in on time).

You can get strawberries in the market now—but it is not possible to have that strawberry shortcake "that Mother used to make." Gee, how I miss your cooking, Mother. And that isn't all!

RUTH LOUISE.

III

Moscow, USSR.

Dear Mother:

I have had a very nice birthday. Some friends of mine from the Embassy threw a real birthday party—birthday cake, candles (23 of them—I told them I was 21 and they wouldn't believe me), presents, a party and a moonlight swim out on the Moscow river.

The first of September I leave for the Caucasus for a month's trip through the mountains. I shall go with a group of Russians—I haven't met any of them yet but the trip has been arranged through Proletarian Tours (OPTE). I shall go to the Caucasus third class on the train (only "tourists" travel otherwise) which will take two days and I shall be hiking for 21 days in the mountains. My luggage, not to exceed 16 pounds, will be carried on a pack horse and I shall carry a small rook-sack on my back, so I plan to have not more than one or two pounds in the sack.

Yesterday, free-day, I helped organize a visit to the summer camp of the GPU military. It is very difficult to get into the place since it is military grounds. In Europe, and in the USSR as well, they are very strict about letting visitors into military property. I believe that in the U.S.A. they are not as particular, isn't that correct? No kodaks were allowed and all those going had to be vouched for before they went. I was quite impressed, not only here but also at the Moscow garrison where I have been several times to rifle shoot, at the naturalness of the common soldiers towards their commanders. It is very clear that they respect the superior officer and obey him promptly, but there is a certain comradeship between them that does not exist in the other countries that I have seen. The other day when I was over at the Moscow garrison, they were practicing jumping on the run over a high wooden horse. It was training for learning to mount a real horse from the rear in the flash and is, of course, quite difficult. Some were doing it with graceful ease and others were rather clumsy. The commanding officer said "Here, I'll show you." He did +, but was not so awfully good and not the best of the group by any means. They all laughed at him and said, "You're not so good yourself." Lord! a man would get court-martialed in some places I know, for less than that. But they all, including the commander, got a big laugh out of it. On the other hand when he gives an order they promptly carry out the command with precision but there is a lack of too much "heel-clicking."

Russians (in no other place in the world have I seen the like either) have remarkable ability in mass singing. On excursions—which are very common and frequent in all circles—and on marches especially, they sing, they sing, and sing beautifully and lustily with pleasing harmonies. Never have I seen a Russian crowd going somewhere into the country without lusty yet lovely mass singing. It is always strong and vigorous, never peters out. The soldiers marching and continually singing with vigorous harmony and part singing (one person singing and the mass giving back a reply) is truly stirring. We used to marvel at the Russian church choirs we used to hear on tour in America, but this has it all beat hollow—here they *all* sing and beautifully, not just a few who have been trained for the church. Is it training or native ability? Any Americans that happen to be in a Russian group that is singing can only gum up the works, if they start to help in the mass singing!

By the way, to the military camp, we took some pictures of the strikes in the U. S. A. to show to the soldiers out there. They were only politely interested, what they really wanted to know was about Germany —and asked if any of us had just come from Germany. America to them is some place somehow out of their realm of existence (the same way that the USSR seems something very remote at home) and Germany is quite in their thoughts and a very real factor in their thinking.

I am well and quite happy except that I miss you all. I have gained about five pounds, due to eating quite a lot of bread and practically no fruit or green vegetables, but I never felt better. I am going to join a class in plastic dancing, when I return from the Caucasus, which should prove interesting and should bring my weight down to the "nice level" again. Yesterday I picked up a pair of fur mittens (a thumb and then a hand) in one of the stores here in Moscow, so when you think of me this winter you will know that my hands are warm anyway. The furs are lovely and are a great temptation, but I ain't got much money right now what with my Caucasus gallivantin' and all! !

Anna Louise is finishing her book which will be called "Between Two Worlds" and which is about her thirteen years in the Soviet Union. It will be the best thing that she has done, I believe, and really has the makings of being a guide to those legions of young American youth who are finding it difficult to "find themselves"—(always having been a difficult problem for those leaving adolescence and growing into manhood and womanhood, and which has been aggravated by the unemployment and depression). She has put some real analysis and philosophy intermingled with her experiences, mistakes, disappointments, disillusionments, successes, triumphs. Everyone she has let read parts is very enthusiastic. It will be a book of between 300 and 400 pages and gives a fairly concise review of the changes that have been and are beginning to grow out of this great social revolution, that a foreigner, and American can understand.

Love,

BUMPY.

IV

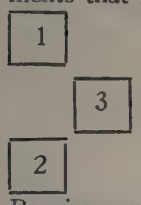
On train going south to Transcaucasus.

Sept. 4th, 1934.

Dear Johnny:

Here I am riding on an express train ("hard" of course) going south—will be on the train for two days and two nights.

On this train cars are divided into ten compartments that look like this:



There are upper berths over these wooden benches which makes possible a total of 6 persons in a compartment. Three of them are from Leningrad and one is going on the same Caucasus trip as I am—(I'll send you the map of the trip when I have finished with it.) All are Russians and very kindhearted—they have a sixth sense of knowing how to be openly friendly and pleasant, yet do not overdo it or make themselves "de trop" in anyway. The minute they knew I was a foreigner and couldn't speak Russian well—as a matter of course they helped me all they could in getting a roll of bedding from the porter for the night.

My actual trip after I get down in the mountains will be twenty-two days, making a total from Moscow of some twenty-eight days. I have a small rook sack of staple foods, which I shall carry on my back and a small roll of bedding and change of clothing which weighs about 14 lbs. and will be carried on a pack horse we will have for the purpose. Can you imagine your fond sister living for a month on only 14 lbs. of bedding and clothing. But don't let your hopes soar too high. I am still as particular about my clothes as ever—We are going to be provided with food but such as sugar, salt, cheese I have to carry myself.

I have a supply of quinine with me since we pass through one community where half the population has active malaria and the remainder are subject to malaria!

After the trip I shall be at Batum (a beautiful sea-resort with a marvelous climate) for about four days to "rest up" before going back to Moscow.

The Proletarian Tours (OPTE) really afford a wonderful opportunity. They make it possible for workers in the Soviet Union to travel throughout U. S. S. R. inexpensively and in a way I like to travel i. e.: to out of the way places, walking, horse-back and "what have you." It's much more of an adventure than going as a tourist and also more exercise.

The Russian people, I know, are direct, kind-hearted, not at all affected, and get pleasure out of quite simple things, so they make pleasant companions for a trip of the sort I am taking and are anything but blasé.

Love,
RUTH LOUISE.

Private Business on the Desert

She was a nut-brown maiden, under a tousel of wind-blown hair—wind-blown by nature and not by the artifices of civilization!

The road from Modesto to Madera is, as every traveler knows, one of the hottest stretches of highway in existence. We were taking it, three in a Dodge coupe, on a sweltering day in August, with a forty-mile gale whipping hot sand into our faces through the open windows. The windows had to be open because a Dodge is a Dodge. They used, didn't they, in the brave days of old, to boil victims in oil by lowering them feet first slowly into a vat? Well, we were in the first stage.

"Watermelon on Ice—10c a Slice!" The crude lettering jolted us. Watermelon! Ice! Out here on the all but trackless plain, a hundred miles from nowhere and not a shack in sight?

There was, though. A wayside stall, a whipping cottonwood tree and the maid, nutbrown and bobbed. Oh, yes, and the watermelon—great piles of them. And honeydews and Persians and musks. And somewhere the ice. And the "slices" she brought us were full quarter melons.

She wasn't pretty—yet. Her features, I suppose, would have classified "plain." They were scrawny, uneven, little-girl features. But in a year or two—look out! She had a wide slow smile that followed on after an eager, puzzled scrutiny from clear blue eyes. Such a wistful, wishful maiden, so anxious to please and be liked, and so unconscious of any way to accomplish it except to be sweet and agreeable and swiftly and willingly efficient in waiting upon her customers. So deftly she served us, so gravely she smiled at our sallies. Fourteen she told us, and she would be in high ninth this year in Madera where she went to school. A dreaming girl! I suspect her of being deeply religious, bourgeoning into womanhood under the spell of the "Crucified Christ" and "The Risen Lord." What else could have matured her so, out here on the windy spaces of the San Joaquin?

At any rate, she restored our faith in Young America. Once, near Los Angeles, we had been sold vegetables by a young Japanese, aged, probably ten. We had thought him a marvel. We had said: "American children could never be depended upon like that, out here on the highway, out of sight of the house, with no one to consult or advise." And here was our nut-brown maid, efficient, reliable, trustworthy, capable of meeting the public, capable of unconscious charm. "It is good," we said, "to have been here."

And now, I suppose, by the time this gets into print some alert county official will have motorcycled up to the stand where we left her dreaming—her book on her lap, her eyes on the wide horizon—and told her she would have to stop dispensing cold melon to tired and dusty travelers or buy a Restaurant and Refreshment License at $60.00 per year. Motorists are supposed to buy their refreshments at properly licensed dispensaries in the scattered towns along the highways. It costs money to do business in these towns and business men don't relish competition from dreaming girls who don't have to add rents and city taxes to their overhead.

Once Harry Carr mentioned in print a new and lusciously cool date-drink he had imbibed on the wide sandy wastes of the Palm Springs Desert. We sampled it on our next trip out and found it all he had represented it to be. But on our second trip, though we had detoured miles to repeat the experience, we were rebuffed at the door. Only in the hot town of Indio, twenty miles back on the highway, only at the sticky counter of the village drug store fountain, were fresh date milk drinks to be purchased by hot and thirsty travelers. No longer under the fronded palms whose lofty scaffoldings made cathedral arches under the lacework sky and whose cool aisles stretched to shimmering infinitudes of shaded horizons could wanderers from unknown distances eat of the fruit of the tree by the magic, water-lilied, stone-basined pool. Dates were to be sold there in packages only!

And this is the Liberty of Private Initiative we are supposed to treasure so dearly! This is the era of Competitive Capitalism whose unrestricted Individualism the wicked NRA must leave unhampered. I will bet

you a slice of ice cold watermelon in the San Joaquin Valley that we never have another regimentation half so irksome as the regimentation that private business, big and little, in league with Republican forms of government, has been cutting to our measure these past twenty years. We ought to welcome social control as a return to the liberties for which our fathers fought! And when the corseting regimentation of government control comes along I expect to find it as grateful a contrast as watermelon and date drinks on a hot and dusty highway!

JULIA N. BUDLONG.

Education and Social Progress

Devotees of the philosophy of force (militarists) tell us that social progress is brought about by competition between man and man, between tribe and tribe, nation and nation; and that as a result of this struggle of man with man, tribe with tribe, nation with nation, the inferior men, tribes and nations are destroyed, leaving the superior peoples to build a civilization which the inferior groups and nations were incapable of building. The militarists see human progress as dependent upon the political hegemony of "superior" nations, upon a leadership and domination maintained by force.

Science, as well as common sense, denies the truth of the foregoing tenets of the philosophy of force. Darwin and Wallace, as well as such social scientists as Huxley, Spencer and Nasmyth, maintained that social progress depends on the social virtues (mutual aid and unselfishness) and upon art and science—all of which are the products of education.

Man . . . is the most dominant animal that has ever appeared on this earth (says Darwin) and he has spread more widely than any other highly organized form . . . all others have yielded before him. He manifestly owes this immense superiority to his intellectual faculties, to his social habits, which lead him to aid and defend his fellows . . . The intellectual powers and social habits of man are of paramount importance to him.

The anti-social doctrines of militarist-nationalism have sunk deep into the consciousness of the nations, but these doctrines are not grounded on scientific facts. Dr. George Nasmyth, internationally known sociologist, wrote:

the intellectual powers . . . on which man's wonderful advancement has mainly depended, have been developed as the result of his social habits. The advantages of his erect position and his hands have been valuable only as they have been directed by the intellect, so that man's dominant position in the world, in the last analysis, is due to his social qualities.

Dr. Nasmyth goes on to hold that the moral law—all of which is comprehended in unselfishness—is developed by social experience, that "the moral law, which is based on these social habits, is the cementing force which holds society together," and "thus becomes, in the true Darwinian theory, the central and most important factor in social evolution."

When we enter the domain of social evolution, Dr. Nasmyth believed the struggle for existence—the struggle to adapt the planet to our needs—takes on a new aspect:

It becomes a struggle of societies against the physical environment, instead of individuals, and here mutual aid rises to the rank of first importance.

Darwin recognized war as one of the minor factors in the disappearance of inferior races, but,

. . . with highly civilized nations, continued progress depends in a subordinate degree on natural selection. . . . We can only say that it depends on an increase in the number of the men endowed with high intellectual qualities. . . . These qualities constitute the survival factors in the struggle between civilized and barbarous nations.

At the present day (continues Darwin), civilized nations are everywhere supplanting barbarous nations, excepting where the climate opposes a deadly barrier and they succeed mainly through their arts and moral qualities, which are the products of the (trained) intellect.

Darwin points out that war is not natural but the reverse, so far as social progress is concerned:

the bravest men perish in larger numbers . . . and leave no offspring to inherit their noble nature.

He points out further that

. . . militarism, by preventing cooperation and the formation of larger political units, offsets high intellectual powers, such as those possessed by the pagan Greeks.

* * *

Shortsighted selfishness tends to defeat its own end because of the strife which it engenders (wrote Dr. Nasmyth), and it makes cooperation and social progress impossible.

Only by world cooperation can civilization go forward, he believed, and

If any of the advantages of association are lost the social structure falls to a lower plane of evolution and the individual who is a part of society falls with it.

Social wellbeing and progress are therefore not dependent upon competition and hegemony maintained by force—upon *laissez faire* and domination by means of armaments—but upon cooperation between individuals and nations, upon mutual aid, unselfishness and the arts.

At present social evolution is in process of retrogression owing to the deadlock in our educational system, which is based on the doctrines of *laissez faire* or unrestricted individualism; and social evolution will remain on the backward path unless and until there is a drastic reorientation of education, not only in the school, which is the vehicle of juvenile training, but in the press, the principal factor in adult education. Our educational system, like our religious system, is moribund, and if it refuses to evolve in step with man's changing social needs, it will eventually perish, as did the classical Roman system, and the new Dark Ages will be ushered in.

The mastery of the technique of a profession does not constitute culture, and any civilization grounded upon this quicksand is doomed. Such training is stimulated by specific material interest, it leaves the student with no respect for true scholarship, without passion for truth, without critical attitude, without aspiration to quicken the general spirit, and without the social vision essential to world unity and progress.

The proper task of education is to study man's changing economic needs, to analyze and compare economic systems and theories—radical, liberal and orthodox—and to create world-embracing sympathies and interests. The creation of wider sympathies and interests would gradually humanize the competitive industrial struggle and eventually eliminate it in favor of a cooperative commonwealth of nations—a paradise of beauty and plenty wherein the advocate of force and destruction would be incarcerated and treated by psychotherapeutic methods for criminal and social insanity!

RALPH WESTLAKE.

On Being Narrow Minded

Are narrow-minded people dying out? If so, is it a good or a bad sign?

There can be no doubt that we are growing more tolerant these days. In religion, for example! Differences of creeds and sects and denominations do not mean as much as they used to do. There was quite a flutter in the Church of England dovecotes recently, because the Bishop of Liverpool dared to allow prominent nonconformists, even Unitarians, to preach in the wonderful new cathedral in Liverpool. Lord Cecil, a dyed-in-the-wool member of the church of England, moved heaven and earth to have this kind of thing stopped. He thinks that it means danger to the sacred beliefs and practices of the Church of England. But the majority of folks over there were quite placid about the whole matter. On the whole, they welcomed it as a sign that bigotry and exclusiveness were breaking down.

There is the same feeling in this country among most of the religious groups. In the small town where I live there was rather a striking example of this new tolerance some time ago. The most fundamentalist church in town had partly completed the purchase of a new organ when they found that they could not go on with the matter. So, after some maneuvering, the organ was sold to the Roman Catholic church on the understanding that the other church helped to raise the price! When finally the organ was installed the whole community, irrespective of denomination, was present at the service.

I find the same spirit in respect to attendance at the various places of worship. The narrow-minded fanatics are rapidly dying out, even in this somewhat isolated community. Even my own church, strongly liberal and modernist though it be, does not appear so different from the rest as would have been the case a generation ago. The children go indiscriminately to the various Sunday Schools—for periods, to one and then to another—seemingly unaware of doctrinal differences.

Yes, in religious matters a strange kind of tolerance is growing up. I say "strange" advisedly. It is a negative kind of tolerance; it is caused rather by the absence of belief in anything than by any positive apprehension of the essential oneness of all religions. We can be remarkably tolerant of things that do not particularly interest us.

Narrow mindedness has gone, vanished; but it seems to me that the thing that has taken its place is even worse. Our churches are empty today not because people have thought themselves out of religion; our churches are empty because the vast majority of people have no place for any religion of any kind in their lives.

If our churches were empty because a mass of enthusiastic men and women were worshipping or gathering for some better purpose elsewhere then we could rejoice with them in their new cause. If the new religion that they had found was better than ours we could shut up our churches and go and join them. But that is far from being the case.

Say what we may and explain how we will about the defunct church in Russia, at least we can say this about the Communist Party in that country; it has found something tremendously dynamic and powerful to take the place of the Greek Church. These Communists *have* a new religion—albeit without God or immortality—that fills them with enthusiasm, endows them with endurance, gives them vast strength and courage. They are narrow minded, but they have got somewhere and done something.

It is said that somewhere in South America there is a river that begins within narrow confines as a swiftly moving current. Later on, however, it begins to broaden out. Before it enters the sea, so it is said, it is a kind of swamp two miles wide and a foot deep.

Again, let us turn to our present civic morality. How amazingly easy and tolerant we have grown. When in the early days of 1933 it was discovered that a number of our bankers were crooked and had betrayed their trust, did it arouse the righteous indignation of the mass of people? Not at all! There was a startling spirit of tolerance shown. Why? Because our standards have slipped—slipped for every one of us—and we were not surprised that these fellows had been feathering their nests.

This is an extremely complex and bewildering machine age in which we live, and it has "queered" our ethical standards to a remarkable degree. Because life *is* so complex, because the ramifications of our predatory system of society affect every one of us, we cannot see with the same clearness as of yore. When so many millions of us are so far removed from the old and simpler methods of seedtime and harvest, when so many of us are just bolts and cogs, as it were, in a super-complex machine, we seem to have lost our old morality.

For our youth who are growing up there is an easy tolerance about money-making. One reason for our crime problem today is that there seems to be lacking a complete absence of ethical sense or guidance as to what is right and what is wrong. "Easy money" seems to be the watchword and one ought not to trouble overmuch as to how the money is made. We have attained a predatory system to the nth degree. We are extremely tolerant of the other fellow so long as we have an equal chance to do our little bit of exploitation.

The thing that most of us thinking and serious individuals are afraid of today, the thing that we dread, the thing that may wreck the NRA and all attempts to lift these United States out of the pit, is *graft*. Graft succeeds because we as a people have grown tolerant of it. It could not live and flourish as it does unless it had a particularly nutritious soil in which to grow. Graft flourishes because we most of us like our share of it. It rears its hydra head again and again because we are tolerant of it. And if we continue in this criminal tolerance it will pull down our social fabric about our ears.

We *are* tolerant and easy these days. We don't think much. We don't like to think. That is why fewer and fewer people care to listen to anything serious in the way of discussion. One can get most of the things required without thought or mental effort. Newspapers give one ready-made opinions in homeopathic doses. One can get music of all kinds by the yard or by the gallon by simply turning on the radio. The more one turns on the duller one's perception grows. It almost seems that all we are required to do in this age is to react and respond; we are more or less a bundle of reflexes.

Tolerance these days! Yes; tolerance born of lack of thought; tolerance bred of ease; tolerance, deep down, because heaven only knows where this mad world is going to, anyhow.

I am a liberal and an out-and-out modernist, born

and bred in the British Labor Party, but I'm fed up with this easy tolerance; it is leading us straight to hell. I'm for narrow mindedness that is not indifferent to the claims of righteousness and truth.

Those of us who are lovers of our kind and friends of men will have to know pretty definitely what is black and what is white and remove ourselves forever from that grayish patch of inertness and aimlessness that we have called tolerance. We shall have to decide very definitely where we stand and what we stand for.

Let us take the whole issue in its very broadest sense. Let us look at the whole picture as it presents itself to us today. Most of us have an uneasy feeling deep down within us that this predatory system of ours has run amuck and is carrying us we know not where. Well, the question is: Are we bound to continue riding on an infernal machine that is going to smash us all to bits in the end? Can't we get off and say we have had enough? If we are pretty well settled in our minds that we are riding on a machine that is rushing merrily to hell, why not get off before it begins to rush along too fast for us to disembark?

We who are firm believers in the liberal principles of altruism and justice and mercy and equity are bound by our very profession of faith and by our glorious heritage to *do something about it.* Our Pilgrim Fathers left their country and began anew; they cut themselves entirely adrift from the old because it had become intolerable for them.

We cannot board our bark and sail away for lands unknown but we can come to a decision and be positive about it. We *can* assert that we have had enough of it and at this eleventh hour firmly resolve upon a plan of action.

Hitler and his followers are narrow minded and they have accomplished something. We cannot follow their example because they are narrow nationalists and our salvation must include the whole of mankind.

What we can do is to settle in our own minds once and for all what is unrighteous, what is unjust, what is out of keeping with our principles of equity and truth. Once the decision is clear in our minds let us say collectively that we will have no more to do with the agencies of disruption and oppression.

But what exactly are we to *do,* some of you will ask. Nothing more or less than finding ways and means of withdrawing from a system of society that cannot be mended and is doomed to certain destruction. Let us leave the whole of it and begin living a life that is controllable. A great body of us will have to set ourselves apart and say that we will not only have nothing to do with any further war, but also that we will have no lot nor part in this selfish, grafting, rotten system of society that is as surely doomed to destruction as the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Only such a movement, world wide in extent, embracing men and women of all religions and no religions the world over, will save the best of our civilization and culture for the generations yet unborn.

HARRY TAYLOR.

Edward Rowland Sill: Artist in Prose

It would be a loss to the literary treasure of America to overlook the prose writings of Edward Rowland Sill. His poetry is of course esteemed by those who respond to clarity and depth of thought conveyed by finished craftsmanship; the noble stanzas from his "Fool's Prayer," for example, being undoubtedly destined for immortality:

> These clumsy feet, still in the mire,
> Go crushing blossoms without end;
> These hard, well-meaning hands we thrust
> Among the heart-strings of a friend.
>
> The ill-timed truth we might have kept—
> Who knows how sharp it pierced and stung?
> The word we had not sense to say—
> Who knows how grandly it had rung?

But the artistry, wit and insight of Sill's prose are as yet too little appreciated. As sparkling-dry comment on the exactions and interruptions of life, how could their toll be more accurately registered than in a letter to a friend about his own correspondence which, he declares, is written in the evenings, "after being wearied by the doings (and getting-done-to's) of the day." Thereby establishing rueful fellowship with all others who know too well the abrasive "Getting-done-to's."

Enjoyers of orchestral music will find his observation on the brass instruments discerning, whether or not they wholly agree with it:

> What a splendor brass is when exquisitely played. How it winds and winds into one's very Ego, and tangles itself up with the emotions and passions, and soars up with them. The wood sings all *around* one—the strings wail and implore *to* us—but the brass enters in and carries one off bodily. Do you concur?

He records his feeling about publication of his work as different from that of some other writers. Where they hope that their manuscripts will be used, he produces "thing after thing—both prose and verse," and then with equanimity, he tells another friend, stows them away, "never sending them anywhere, or thinking of printing any book of them, at present, if ever." It is an interesting speculation whether such holding back of completed work enhances the strength and worth of that which an author does submit for publication.

Has a lovelier or more accurate comment than this of Sill's been made on a hummingbird?—

> It does not seem an earth inhabitant at all. It flashes down upon a flower-bed, like a mere reflection of light thrown by a restless mirror, and flashes off again, and has done nothing but dip a rapid bill into a flower-cup or two. It is a sprite, an elfin of the elements. It is the shooting star of the garden firmament. It has no known orbits, and the most conspicuous thing it ever does is to vanish.

In his "Rhapsody of Clouds" he records blue of the zenith so intense with light as to be unbearable to the unshielded eyes, and then

> . . . as the Cleopatra's barges of slow clouds sail softly across, with their round, bellying sails of snow and pearl, it only makes the azure more "deeply and darkly" blue. By-and-by the color, or the very depth and boundlessness of it, seems to inundate one's brain, as the blue, deep sea-tide lifts through a coral reef, and all the little ocean-creatures stretch out their delicate hands and feed confidingly in the lucid clearness. So do delicate brain-fancies float and feed tranquilly in this inflooding tide of the blue heavens.

He is enthralled by the constant motion also in the substance of the cloud itself, when its "gossamer tracery is

all alive, as if the films and veins of agate should come to life, and begin to weave and unweave their interchanging fibres." Once when he was climbing in the "American Alps"—the Sierra Nevadas—he won an unforgettable glimpse into the celestial loom-work itself. From a crag "precisely underneath the line of low cloud formation," where he had paused to rest, he beheld with awe and delight,

> the mountain drapery weaving itself—out of nothing, as it appeared: blue air on one side of the line; dark slaty films (nearest it), then shreds, then masses of flying cloud, on the other. Clear across the sky extended the distinct edge of this swift and incessant weaving. It was like nothing but a great shadowy banner streaming out in the gale from an invisible cord strained tight across the sky. It was the work of the Earth Spirit in Faust:—
>
> "At the roaring loom of Time I ply,
> And weave for God the garment thou seest Him by."

In the crimson, orange and scarlet of a bonfire, one of his childhood joys which he never lost in manhood, Sill found a gorgeous symbol of free-will and determinism in the philosophic realm. Flame-tints and the exquisite liberty of their dancing that fascinated him always, and like Wordsworth's rainbow revealed the boy as a father of the man, declared to him as well the august and law-governed interplay of cosmic forces.

The imaginative artistry of his prose is also conveyed by a compound noun that he devised, to include in compact form both the sonority and the rich color of certain words:—"clang-tint." The difference in timbre and aura (or what William James called the psychological "fringe"), between words rated by the dictionaries as nearly synonymous, is often surprising and sometimes baffling to an author conscientiously seeking the "*mot juste.*" A term having a precise meaning, Sill notes,

> . . . is one thing if it has dropped caroling out of Grecian skies, and from the delicate hands of Keats and Shelley, but quite another thing if it has come clattering and rumbling up out of clodhoppers' horse-talk.

And as the difference between tones on the instruments of an orchestra

> . . . is due to their diverse groups of harmonic overtones, one superposed on another, so the individual atmosphere of any word comes from its having its own composite set of associations, some faint and vague, some strong and definite, that have through all its history been clustering upon it.

Again and again this "clang-tint" of words was expertly achieved by the inventor of the term himself. For with sensitive craftsmanship he tested verbal tones as an armorer the ring of the swordblade that he tempers, and chose verbal hues imaginatively as a painter some delicate blending of his water-colors, or the oils on his richly-furnished palette, or again as a pastellist selects just the right nuance from his crayons in their rainbow-bright array. Indeed, in every true artist, no matter what resplendent medium he employs, Edward Rowland Sill discerned a union of the spiritual swordsmith and the enraptured colorist, always ardent for accuracy and tasting the very nectar of gladness whenever in his chosen sphere of craftsmanship he attains the beauty of the perfect clang-tint.

ELIOT WHITE

The Study Table

Non-Violent Resistance

Here* is a book for believers in non-violent resistance, for those who are interested and want to know more about it, and for those whose acceptance is withheld because certain aspects of the theory have until now seemed unscientific. If you are already a convert Mr. Gregg will strengthen your faith; if you are interested but ignorant he will enlighten you; if your mind is obscured by doubts he will remove them. Until now the literature of non-violent resistance has been fragmentary and unsatisfactory. Tolstoy, Fox, Garrison and Gandhi have all been advocates of this way of life but none of them has given us a full statement of his belief in the form of a workable philosophy. "The Power of Non-Violence" is what a great many people have been waiting for: an exhaustive, scholarly, scientific, unsentimental presentation of a theory of pacifism which is slowly but persistently making headway among some of the finest minds of the present world. It is exactly the sort of non-mystical, common sense treatment of the subject which is needed to advance its popularity and usefulness.

I find especially suggestive and forceful Mr. Gregg's consideration of personal violence between man and man. Here he is not content to enumerate the usual moral and spiritual objections to violence but builds up with a wealth of illustrative material from psychologists and physiologists a sound case against physical conflict as a destructive psychological and mental force. If you want to know something of the potency of non-violent resistance both as personal exercise and applied on a national scale I commend you to the chapter called "Moral Ju-Jutsu." There is no better statement to be found anywhere of the case for absolute pacifism.

Non-violent resistance, as Mr. Gregg points out, is no cowardly acquiescence.

> Cowardice, he says, is more harmful morally than violence. . . But he who has the courage to fight and yet refrains, is the true non-violent resister. Because the coward fears, he cannot love, and if he cannot love he cannot be wholly successful in non-violent resistance. He cannot use this moral ju-jutsu completely, effectively.

This is a vital point and cannot be stressed too much in the face of the hoary argument that pacifism is cowardice while willingness to fight is heroism. True pacifism, which is the courage to steadfastly refuse to be coerced into actions which violate the highest ideals of human relationships, is and always will be essentially more noble and heroic than passive acceptance of violence as inevitable.

The record to date of non-violent resistance as a weapon in settling national disputes is not impressive save in the case of Gandhi and the Indian nationalists. I am inclined to be somewhat less certain than Mr. Gregg that the Indian experiment is a hopeful augury for the rest of the world for it seems to me that the situation in that country is peculiar and that the psychological and religious factors present are so different from those prevailing in the west that comparisons are fallacious. The American character—or the English or French or German, for that matter—does not admit of a mystical devotion to severe moral idealism and we have not yet produced a Gandhi. What happened

*"The Power of Non-Violence," by Richard B. Gregg, J. B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia. $2.50.

in India under Gandhi's leadership was possible only because of a spiritual discipline utterly alien to the western mind. But Mr. Gregg is hopeful that the rest of the world may be able to learn something from the example of the Indian nationalists; and we can agree with him that unless it does adopt similar spiritual tactics we are doomed to a final orgy of violence and war which may well destroy western civilization.

One of the things that impresses me the most about "The Power of Non-Violence" is the competent marshalling of facts and the apparent erudition that went into the making of the book. The pacifist movement is sorely in need of men who, like Mr. Gregg, can present the case for non-violence in an orderly, rational and unemotional manner. His bibliography, consisting of over fifty pages, is not only evidence of the thoroughness with which he has undertaken his job but is a fascinating running commentary on the books he has used in the preparation of his own work. (Incidentally, I am pleased to see that he acknowledges his indebtedness to Blanche Watson who was one of the very first to advance the cause of Gandhi and non-violence in America. Her services in this work deserve greater recognition than they have yet received.)

I believe this book is an authoritative and valuable work but I do not think it is an unanswerable defence of non-violence. Occasionally there are pretty big holes in Mr. Gregg's logic and at times he advances sweeping generalizations without giving us the concrete demonstrations that would alone make valid his point. When he says for example that true non-violent resistance "results ultimately in changing the purposes and desires (values) of the opponent so that he and the resister finally agree without any remaining sense of frustration" we are justified in being politely incredulous and calling for proof. One can think of innumerable situations in which absolute personal non-violence would be not only suicidal but ethically senseless. Mr. Gregg would have done well to have enlarged on this particular phase of the problem. And in spite of his defence of the economic pressure of the boycott I still remain unconvinced of its legitimacy as a weapon of non-violence. In this respect he says that to argue that the boycott is immoral because it causes unemployment and suffering "would compel one also to say that the breaking up of a well established opium den or gang of thieves would also be immoral because it would cause unemployment and suffering among those engaged in such occupations." But opium peddlers and thieves are open enemies of organized society and putting them out of business is hardly the same thing as throwing a German toy maker or a Lancaster weaver out of a job in order to bring their governments to terms. The tremendous effectiveness of the boycott as an economic weapon is undeniable but it is coercion no matter how you look at it and inevitably involves suffering of the innocent. I fail to undersand how a sincere advocate of non-violence can uphold it.

The intelligent reader will discover these flaws in the argument readily but he will not permit them to blind him to the real importance of what Mr. Gregg is saying. Whatever one may think about the enormous difficulties which stand in the way of realization of his ideal its value and importance for these times cannot be over-emphasized. At a time when many of our liberals and radicals are openly declaring their belief in the necessity of violence in the class struggle one can be fervently thankful for such a book as this and hopeful that it may serve as a rallying point for the shattered forces of those who believe that peace, love, and brotherhood are something more than the catch phrases of oratory.

MORTIMER BREWSTER SMITH.

Two Poets

The publication of a book of poems by Edna St. Vincent Millay is a literary event of the first importance. This volume* is her first in three years. It follows "The Buck in the Snow," which was largely experimental and showed some signs of faltering in large achievement; and "Fatal Interview," that brace of fifty-two sonnets which, like some earlier sonnets, raised their author to the exclusive rank of such masters as Keats and Wordsworth. Now, in this latest offering of her work, Miss Millay attests the full maturity of her supreme poetic powers. Here are ineffably lovely lyrics, cool and deep meditative pieces, no love songs with quite the old passionate and abandoned cry, but sonnets which match the greatest examples of this august and noble form. The nature pieces are as real and lovely as anything ever written by this poet, though the old salt tang of the sea is absent (Miss Millay now lives not on the Maine coast but on a New York farm!); there are a few poems of profound philosophic insight; those of us who still stir uneasily in the memory of Sacco and Vanzetti will welcome the "Two Sonnets In Memory." But it is the sonnet sequence at the end of the volume, "Epitaph for the Race of Man," which is most moving, and which is most likely to endure.

There is an epic note in these sonnets and a cosmic range in time and space. Miss Millay makes the universe her realm of thought, and the vast cycle of organic life her theme. In this she sees man as a little span, and his life upon this planet as a mere episode of passing triviality. Clearly she foresees the doom of the race—and terribly she forecasts the wreckage of its end. Earth is an "unhappy planet born to die," and has distinguished man not at all from the animal creation from which he springs. Nor has man done anything to justify survival! On the contrary, has he not himself achieved destruction "in intimate conflict at (his) brother's hand"? In any case, while stars and planets pitilessly look down, "most various man, cut down to spring no more,"

> Here lies, and none to mourn him but the sea,
> That falls incessant on the empty shore.

This is a dreadful fatalism, sprung from years of mundane chaos which have plainly smitten the poet's soul with a final despair. But over it all is a beauty so awful that it seems to reconcile the spirit even to such a picture of inescapable dissolution of man's hopes. As to the poetic power of it all, we regard it as unsurpassed by anything since Milton brooded upon "Chaos and dark night." Will Miss Millay in the end, like Milton, find

*"Wine From These Grapes," by Edna St. Vincent Millay. Published by Harper & Brothers. $2.00.

a paradise regained to match the paradise so tragically lost?

Stanton Coblentz is a younger poet, whose writings in recent years have been winning wide attention and respect. Many poems published in certain of our leading magazines and journals are here gathered and presented in a most attractive volume.† The latest of a series of volumes, both in prose and verse, this book reveals its author at his best. His nature pieces have an especial poignancy—see the notable "Sea Sketches" midway in the volume! But we like especially the social poems, which show the prophet as well as the singer. Mr. Coblentz is far more optimistic than Miss Millay. He has a sense of cosmic purpose, which prompts him to the dream of a better day. He catches glimpses of the

Radiance that filters dimly from that cradling place of light
Where the Master Souls sit weaving for their brothers lost in night.

But he yields to no easy faith, and closes his eyes to no current ills. It is what man suffers that demands healing.

We are pleased to note poems in these pages which first appeared in UNITY. Mr. Coblentz is one of our own!

J. H. H.

An Anthology of Peace*

The heart of man has turned away from war if the tongues of the poets be the voice of the heart.

Reading literally thousands of verses a year for the past decade—submitted to poetry journals and general periodicals, entered in contests, sent to us for professional criticism, verses publishable and unpublishable, representing a large proportion of the fifty thousand poetic aspirants there are estimated to be—we have noted a great change in the attitude of poets. Ten years ago flag-waving, soldier-praising verses abounded; now they are rare. Peace poems were scarce; now scarcely a day passes without at least one poetic blast against war reaches us. *The poets have become pacifists.* One proof of this significant, hopeful fact is this book, an anthology of poems in praise of peace and to shame war by more than eighty poets, most of whom are living, edited by Thomas Curtis Clark, who has done more to encourage poetry of social vision than any other living man, and by Winfred Ernest Garrison distinguished literary editor of the *Christian Century.*

Here are cries from the heart no guns can silence, songs that will help silence guns forever. Here are the texts for a thousand sermons for peace. Every poetry library should contain this book, every speaker for peace quote it. We need not despair of achieving peace as long as there are books like this heartening ray of light shining between the war clouds that now threaten the world. Here are poems by many poets familiar to UNITY readers, including the stirring "Prayer for a World in Arms" by UNITY's editor-in-chief. Dr. Holmes's lines:

We hate and we are hated,
We slay, and lo, are slain,
We feed, and still unsated
We hunt our prey again.

as masterfully concentrate the tragic situation and the law of justice as the need for conscientious objection and civil disobedience if war be commanded are summed in his lines:

Absolve our fell allegiance
To captain and to king.

Among the strongest poetically and intellectually of these poems are those by Louis Ginsberg, Homer C. House, Raymond Kresensky, Benjamin Musser, Anna Louise Strong and Robert Whitaker, all of whom are contributors to UNITY. Brent Dow Allinson is creditably represented, as are Elinor Lennen, Merrill Root and others who have appeared in these pages. "Gotterdammerung" by the "American Keats" who died so young but left such a cherished lyric legacy, Ernest Hartsock, is one of the peaks of a book where nothing is flat. The book is admirably keynoted by Thomas Curtis Clark's poignant, forceful "Who Goes There?", the answer to which is "The host of those who swear it shall not be again." We may be excused if we boast this collection includes also

LUCIA TRENT.
RALPH CHEYNEY.

†"The Merry Hunt," by Stanton A. Coblentz. Published by Bruce Humphries, Inc., Boston. $2.00.

*"One Hundred Poems of Peace," edited by Thomas Curtis Clark and William Ernest Garrison. Published by Willett Clark & Co., Chicago. $1.25.

Between Faiths

Here, where I gave a witness, Lord,
When madness raged afar,
When churches blessed and kissed the sword,
And children carolled war;

Now, that the direful years disclose
The folly and the crime
That deluged all the world with woes,
And shamed the face of Time;

Do these repent who so betrayed
The love their lips confessed?
Who traffic still in wars of trade,
And arm at Mars' behest.

Now that I witness, Lord, for men
Who talk not of Thy grace,
Yet dare the mob and prison den
To give their fellows place;

How shall I measure faith like their's
Against such faith in Thee
As bars me from Thy altar stairs
Because my soul is free?

ROBERT WHITAKER.*

*Written in Los Gatos, California, where the author was minister of the Baptist church when America plunged into a war (1917) which he refused to support. Few clergymen in this country were such faithful witnesses to their pacifist faith, or suffered so terribly therefor. Now, a minister at large in the great movement for revolutionary social change, Dr. Whitaker has no church.—EDITOR.

Correspondence

Steps Toward Collective Security

EDITOR OF UNITY:

In spite of increased war preparations and futile peace conferences the cause of peace is making some gains. Thanks to the armament merchants, war is being viewed in a truer light, and the day is nearer when the whole business of armament manufacture will be placed in the hands of the governments in America, England and France. Overweening greed has shaped events for its own undoing and the curbing of the war spirit.

Another fact which may prove helpful was

brought to public attention, recently in a letter to the *Christian Science Monitor* from Wickham Steed, former editor of the London *Times*. It recalls that the opening passage of Article 16 of the League of Nations Covenant reads:

Should any member of the League resort to war in disregard of its covenants under Articles 12, 13 and 15, it shall *ipso facto* be deemed to have committed an act of war against all other members of the League.

This strong pronouncement was designed to act as a powerful check on any nation contemplating war; but the refusal of the United States to join the League raised the danger of future entanglements over the rights of neutrals. The British government proceeded to "whittle down" the obligations of Article 16 so as to avoid possible conflict with the United States, and for the time being this part of the League Covenant lost its virility as a measure for war prevention.

The signing of the Pact of Paris by the United States and all the other strong nations has, in the view of Mr. Steed, eliminated the troublesome question of the rights of neutrals. War has been renunciated by this treaty, and no nation could withdraw from the treaty without virtually proclaiming war as its national policy. There is little danger that any nation will outlaw itself in this way. Even militarist Japan has made vehement denial that she has any war plans.

Mr. Steed believes the one needful step now is a full understanding that "renunciation of war . . . entails renunciation of neutrality towards the war-maker," and that the way is thus cleared to bring such pressure as is needed against any nation that violates its treaty covenant. If Mr. S. O. Levinson's suggestion that the League of Nations incorporate the Paris Pact as a part of the League Covenant, is acted upon favorably, it will bring to the foreground this asserted principle that there are no neutrals when the treaty is violated.

Under this interpretation, which I believe will become the accepted one, the League of Nations would be free to take drastic action, if such were deemed necessary, against any violator of the treaty covenant. But that fact will in itself go far to make drastic action unnecessary. I have the firm conviction that financial and trade boycotts will prove an effective means of dealing with a headstrong nation.

Denver, Colo. F. S. KINDER.

The Field

(*Continued from page 142*)

brought Fascism in Italy, Naziism in Germany, Dictatorship in Austria, Poland, and a dozen other States in Middle Europe; revolution in Spain, Communism in Russia, industrial upheaval and dictatorial power in U. S. A., chaos in South America, a volcanic situation in France, and deepening social conflict in every other state throughout the world; revolt against territorial Imperialism in India, etc., and against financial Imperialism in the South American states, etc., and Imperialist rivalry between the Great Powers—Britain, U. S. A., Japan, France, Germany and Italy.

The paramountcy and fundamental character of that conflict is proved by the fact that everything bows before it—The League of Nations, World Disarmament Conferences and World Economic Conferences, and even the International Labor Office when vital issues are before it. The fact that after sitting for two and a half years the World Disarmament Conference has collapsed in the midst of the biggest armaments race ever known is undeniable proof that forces stronger than appear on the surface are guiding the destinies of the League of Nations. It is necessary to get a clearer picture and understanding of those forces.

Too long the Peace Movement has watched the march of world events with complacence. It has signally failed to give to economic factors the consideration they deserve. While the Peace Movement pleads with the League of Nations for disarmament, the latter is being controlled by hidden economic forces which make disarmament impossible. In 1906 we saw Europe stampeded into a notorious armaments' race. Politicians, poets, the "intellectuals" and even the Church succumbed to the panic. The British public, worked up into a frenzy were induced to shout: "We want eight and we won't wait." The politicians bowed to the clamor, with little protest from public leaders. Thus the country got its eight cruisers, and eight years later, the World War.

The same influences are at work today. The same panic is being created. Another but far more dangerous armaments' race is under way—more dangerous because the death-dealing power of armaments has increased many fold since 1918. Thus speeds the world to its doom, unless the entire course of events be changed.

But who will change them, and how?

The central fact about the modern world so far as the peace issue is concerned, is that, outside Russia, all the major economic and financial controls are in the hands of small groups of people—not in those of Governments, much less those of the people. Each of these groups exists to advance its own material interests. They are well represented, directly or indirectly in the legislatures and governments of almost every country, and Capitalist Governments rarely act contrary to their wishes. In some cases these groups are national in character, and represent particular trades, combines, or associations. In other cases they are international, like the Armament Interests, for instance. Other groups are imperialist in character, as where the investors of one country try to capture the trade and control the financial and economic life of another country by launching loans and promoting public works, setting up and financing new industries, and getting their own nationals placed in all manner of important posts.

Hence we get a vast network of group interests, all of which are private and owe no responsibility to the peoples whose destiny they control, or to the League of Nations, and very little to Governments. That is why most Governments go to the League of Nations, Disarmament Conferences, etc., with their hands tied; why they resort to secret diplomacy, and incidentally why the public are dismayed when they get no results from such assemblies. These group interests are the real sources of power in all Capitalist States, although everything is done to hide that fact from the public. When Government policy is decided upon, no matter who inspires it, it at once becomes "national" policy, and is supported by the big engines of publicity in the name of patriotism. That is precisely how the recent development of "economic national-

ism" has taken place. It explains why the National Government refused to support the abolition of all Air Forces, and the private manufacture of armaments, the shorter working week at the I. L. O. Conference, and why it is at sixes and sevens over the issue of the Indian Constitution, for the difficulty there does not arise over the question of justice or the ability of India to rule herself, but over that of British vested interests.

Now every one of these financial interests thrives upon exploitation. Their combined success results in class and international domination and all the social degradation these involve—class war and racial antagonism, unemployment, poverty amidst plenty, starvation alongside food destruction and the throwing of land out of cultivation, etc.

Those responsible for a society thus organized naturally regard war as an unavoidable necessity which, however regrettable, the public must tolerate. This situation gives rise to numerous interests which live by war and preparation for war. Thus about 90% of the military castes seem unable to think of human relations except in terms of battleships and gunpowder.

Alongside the military castes are the armament makers, assisted to some extent by all the industries which benefit from the manufacture of arms. These interests, unable to quell the lust for profits, especially during a trade depression, delude themselves into believing that an all 'round increase in armaments will in some mysterious way lead to peace.

Then, since most of the big daily newspapers are dependent upon advertisements for their existence, and thrive upon panics, the majority of them sooner or later play the game of the vested interests, with the result that the tide of public feeling tends to swing towards war.

Worse still, when the politicians collapse, the great majority of so-called intellectuals, Church and other social leaders collapse also.

The above is a fair description of the effective controls in the life of today, and in the light of it I ask if it is reasonable to expect from them peace and the well-being of the people? You cannot gather figs from thistles. From its roots, which are greed and the scarcely checked right of human exploitation, to its culmination in a class-ridden society and an imperialistically organized world, a revoltingly rich class on the one side and an equally revolting mass of degradation on the other side, with fear and growing antagonism convulsing the whole, our civilization hangs like a gas-filled globe, which at any moment may burst into countless fragments.

The time has come to speak plainly. The position is too serious to mince matters. So long as society is organized on a basis which inevitably produces the conditions of war, it is futile to pass Resolutions demanding peace and disarmament. Nay, does not such a policy mislead people and cause them to continue in a belief which in fact assists the very evil it is desired to destroy? It is all very well to ask people to support the League of Nations, a "collective peace system," the "substitution of law for force," an International Police Force, etc., but unless it is realized that in present conditions the League is a cockpit for the play of rival Imperialisms, it is highly dangerous to place too much trust in it. The part played by the Great Powers in the League's handling of the Jap-Manchurian affairs is ample justification for my warning. To be frank, the "collective peace system" is largely a chimera in present conditions.

Nevertheless I believe that we ought to hold on to the League and use every opportunity to extend its power and influence. It certainly makes possible a postponement of hostilities in critical situations. Its platform should be used to expose the forces which are at work behind the scenes against the interests of world peace, such as the imperialist ambitions of the Great Powers. But having said that I think we ought frankly to recognize the limitations of a League of Nations which rests on the power, camouflaged in a variety of ways, of thousands of private vested interests, while the well-being of the people never even comes into the reckoning.

It is to the credit of the No More War Movement that it was the first peace organization in this country to recognize and affirm that neither peace nor disarmament can accrue from a society which is founded on the right of human exploitation.

In the conditions of today the No More War Movement is convinced that there is only one way in which the situation can be saved and peace be assured, and that is by a powerful nation taking its courage in its hands and disarming alone. The events of the last few years have proved conclusively that disarmament by agreement among a number of imperialist States is a delusion. What is today needed is an act of great courage which will lift men's minds above the fears, suspicions, rivalries and illegitimate ambitions which today are corrupting the streams of international life, to the purer atmosphere of a new hope and of a finer idealism. Humanity everywhere is looking for the dawn of the age of peace and social well-being, conscious that the means exist to produce it. They cannot understand what is delaying its coming. Whoever gives hope and guidance to this great and expectant multitude will win their support and save civilization. That multitude includes the teeming millions of workers in all lands, the great majority of worshippers in the churches of the world; indeed all the saner elements in society, including a very considerable body of people who, confronted with the tragedy of a collapsing civilization, are prepared to sacrifice all manner of allegiances if given a bold and enlightened lead.

But let us be quite clear upon this, that no Government will or can disarm unless it sets out deliberately to abolish exploitation and thus Imperialism, and to establish the largest possible measure of social justice.

Statement by Gandhi

The following appeal to the members of the Indian Congress was made by Mr. Gandhi in a speech at the All-Indian Congress Committee meeting on July 18th last. It reveals so clearly his personal position that we print the significant parts. Word has come that Mr. Gandhi has withdrawn from the Congress, apparently in order to retain his own freedom of action and to permit the Congress to follow unhampered a course with which Mr. Gandhi is evidently not in entire agreement.—Ed.

"Whilst congratulating the movers of the several amendments I may say that their speeches have only strengthened me in the opinion expressed in my statement. I have

found nothing in them to induce me to alter my decision. Indeed, I have been surprised to see that none of the speakers has taken me to task for advising suspension of civil resistance for everyone except myself. On the contrary all the amendments are unanimous in demanding the suspension of civil resistance. This fact surprises me but does not pain me. It only shows that my decision has come not a moment too soon. In asking me, however, to go a step further and give up the ideal of offering civil resistance myself, you want to deprive me of my individual liberty of action. It is undoubtedly open to you to repudiate my claim to represent the Congress in my civil resistance. I can understand and even appreciate such a repudiation on behalf of the Congress. Individual civil resistance as laid down by the Poona Conference was to be offered in the name of the Congress. And the proposition before you is but a modification of the Poona decision. Civil resistance was then restricted to an indefinite number. Now it is restricted to one single individual.

"The very fact of my approaching you for approval is evidence of my desire to act in the name of, and with authority of, the Congress. But in case you do not see your way to give me that authority, you may still not deprive me of the liberty of individual action. For, that would mean wiping me out of existence itself. I would not hesitate even to wipe myself out if I were convinced that the stop would lead to an advance in the progress of India toward her goal. My conviction on the contrary is that India will not win Swaraj by depriving a single individual of his freedom of action. A speaker has said that I claim to bring Swaraj by my single action. When he says, 'Swaraj won by one man is of no good to the nation,' he only quotes from my own words.

"I have said from a thousand platforms to the school of violence that even if they succeeded in achieving Swaraj by taking the lives of some English and Indian officials, it would be Swaraj for themselves but not for the masses of India. And one would not know whose lives they would take next. Civil resistance is a complete substitute for violence. Through it every one has to achieve his own Swaraj. I have never tried to force my decisions on you. I have no power but that of gentle persuasion. I only urge you not to coerce me to act against my cherished conviction. As your representative I have no desire to go beyond the four corners of the Congress constitution. If I have failed to carry conviction with you, you will refuse to me that authority. But I only plead for the liberty of individual action. The decision is not an outcome of despair. I am an optimist and never give way to despair.

"My decision is born of an unshakable faith in non-violent resistance. It is surely for the general to decide the time for and the manner of action. The general has to be convinced of the soldiers' capacity to act at a given moment. The conditions of service are to be laid down by the general and not by the soldiers. And here you have a general, who has no physical force at his command, he can only appeal to his soldiers' reason and heart. My sole civil resistance is no reflection on any one of you. All those years I was not unaware of the limitations under which I was working. But the time came when it became necessary to cry a halt if the weapon was not to suffer discredit. It is open to you to accept or reject the advice of your general. In a non-violent struggle it is not the general who can dismiss his soldiers. The latter can dismiss him if his terms do not appeal to them.

"This is no threat in my case. I will continue to be a member of the Congress, but will not claim to be its representative. What would be the matter if a year or two more elapse before your faith in him will be restored. The general in the non-violent struggle has no powers of punishment. . . . To ask such a general to alter his course of action is to force him to act against his judgment. You are at perfect liberty to dismiss the general if his commands are obnoxious to you. I do not say it out of anger. If I were to be angry with you for rejecting my advice I should be unfit for the offer of civil disobedience. I claim to be amenable to reason. Even children have to shed all fear of me and have been able to make me bend to their will. . . . Why should you be afraid to order such a man to vacate a place if that is your desire? I tell you, it will not pain me. On the contrary I will thank you for your frankness. But if you decide to retain your general you should cease to demur and should follow his discipline. . . . When I see that our laxity has gone so far as to injure the cause I shall be guilty of breach of the trust, if I did not cry halt, and warn the members that far severer discipline and keener appreciation of the necessity of non-violence in thought, word and deed had to be expected before the people could be called upon to re-engage in the struggle. . . .

"I want you to remain outside jail not to live a life of comfort and luxury. I want you to remain outside to embrace the voluntary poverty in any future struggle. There is no want of work outside the prison. You can offer your lives in the cause of Hindu-Moslem unity. Will you neglect khadi and hope to win freedom for villages when there is untouchability? For you who will be outside there will be no peace, no rest. I have put before you not a single item that has not been included in the Congress program ever since 1920. You may work out that program to the full and you will be entitled then and then alone to ask me to refrain from going to jail.

"If you choose to follow my lead, you have to accept my conditions. If not, you will leave me free to follow the course I consider best, no matter if I am alone. The Bardoli decision of 1922 which the late Hakim Saheb and Dr. Ansari could accept with the utmost difficulty was the step which saved the country from an ignominous defeat and destruction. It brought sufficiently home to the masses that there was no room for violence in a peaceful struggle. Those who have taken part in the recent struggle have been free from violence in deed. God alone knows how far we were non-violent in thought.

"If the country learns the art of going to prison and the art of practicing non-violence as Pathans have done, we should be within easy reach of Swaraj. I am unrepentant about the Bardoli decision of 1922 and consider it to be the act of wise statesmanship. Even so do I consider the present advice. My heart is supposed to be extremely soft and I know that it is as hard as steel."

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